



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:  
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/2912  
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.  
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

**Title:**

Speech opening Australian Independent Publishers' Association Exhibition

Please acknowledge the source as:  
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.  
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/2912

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

Mr. Gold, Mr. Tainton, Ladies and Gentlemen :

Thanks very much for asking me to open this exhibition by the Australian Independent Publishers' Association.

Last Saturday I opened Writers' Week, which ends with a discussion on "Do Writers Matter". There may be a few people with the courage to stand up and say writers don't matter, but I think I would be hard pressed to find anyone to say that publishers don't matter.

I think it's apt that your exhibition is in Adelaide during our Festival of Arts, because

1a.

both the Festival and your exhibition are trying to make people aware of the range of cultural and recreation enjoyments available to them.

In the case of this display, the pleasure and stimulation of reading is highlighted, with the particular emphasis that all the books are published by wholly owned Australian companies.

Your Association has been formed at a time when the pressures on book publishing are very intense, and one of the purposes of the Independent Publishers' Association is to look at ways of lessening those pressures

through co-operative action.

For small publishers, and that means most of the Association's members, the problems of distribution costs, postal rates and tariffs on publishing materials are beyond the capacity of individual companies.

Through your Association, ways of approaching

..3

.3

those difficulties are being formulated on a joint basis. The trial despatch system which has been instituted in Melbourne by Association members is one attempt at lessening cost pressures on small publishers through a self-help operation.

The AIPA is an important organisation within your industry because it is a specialised grouping of publishers, yet it is not in competition with the main trade organisations such as the Australian Book Publishers Association. It is encouraging that the two organisations are setting up a joint committee to avoid any duplication or cross purposes.

Later this year, the Industries Assistance Commission will start its hearings into the publishing industry, and the results of its enquiry will be a major factor in the level of publishing activity in Australia for the rest of the century.

The Book Trades Working Party last year estimated that retail sales of books in Australia in 1974 were worth around \$166 million, the wholesale figure was \$103 million. Of that wholesale figure, \$61.9 million came from books distributed by overseas publishers, leaving \$41.8 million for local publishers.

The IAC's terms of reference are encouraging because they clearly spell out that works of special merit and importance must be published even if they are not commercially viable, and also because the then Federal Government indicated that the difficult question of tariff burdens on publishers materials should also be looked at.

Publishing in Australia should be encouraged, because without a healthy domestic industry producing Australian titles the community cannot expand the range of its experiences as much as it should.

6  
I am sure this exhibition will promote a  
great interest in Australian publishing  
generally, and the work of the Association.

I am very pleased to declare it open.